



# Sandpiper

DEL MAR'S COMMUNITY JOURNAL

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## Roving Teen Reporter

### JASMINE TO GEORGETOWN

by Jerry Wu | Torrey Pines High School Junior



*Jasmine Criqui, departing Roving Teen Reporter. **Thank you and best wishes, Jasmine!***

**G**rowing up, Jasmine Criqui and her parents sat at the dinner table every Monday to share and exchange their opinions on the latest local events and world news. Over the years, these weekly discussions have helped her develop a strong passion for exploring and understanding politics – now taking her talents to Georgetown University, where she plans to pursue political science and a minor in journalism.

During her senior year working on the Del Mar Sandpiper, Jasmine has grown to assume the much-needed youth voice as the roving teen reporter. She has tackled several pressing topics, including the environmental climate conference COP26, the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia, and student mental health. The much more localized platform has taught Jasmine to take different angles to assess how these issues have impacted San Diego while maintaining her unique student perspective.

“It’s been a great lesson taking news stories that affect the whole nation or the whole world and bringing it down to a local level,” she said. “So localizing stories that are massive news stories covered by newspapers everywhere, and putting kind of a more personal spin on it.”

Meanwhile, Jasmine is also grateful and credits the Sandpiper for providing her a window to be an instrumental young voice in the community, calling for more student activism.

“I think that younger voices have historically been and continue to be overlooked. But I will say that now more than ever, it is vital that we have young voices in politics



*Jerry Wu, newly arrived Roving Teen Reporter. **Welcome, Jerry!***

through opportunities like this,” she said.

Amidst the growing urge for gun control nationwide in response to the most recent instance of mass shootings in Uvalde, Texas last month, she strongly believes in the future of bipartisan legislation improving student safety, citing that bipartisanship already exists in the government.

Even when our nation descends into political partisanship, I agree with Jasmine’s viewpoint for the United States to uphold its responsibility to serve and protect its citizens. Doing so might require a nation to adapt to changing times and make slight alterations to its constitution – restricting access to guns or raising the age limit for people to purchase weapons – yet it allows the voices of the people to be heard, which transcends beyond any political agenda.

For the last two years, I have been a part of my high school’s newspaper, Falconer, which has shown me the importance of these principles through truthful reporting. It is also where I met Jasmine for the first time and noticed the strong confidence and intelligence that she admirably carries. With journalism, I enjoy acting as an advocate to those underrepresented by telling their stories to the rest of society. I cannot wait to serve as another youth voice to test the boundaries of political intricacies and embark upon this new journey to leave an imprint on the community. □

# LOOKING FOR LEADERSHIP

**D**el Mar is a different place than in 1976 when the Community Plan was finalized and approved by voters. But the city retains its distinctive character that sets us apart from our neighbors because of the foundation laid by our Community Plan. Generated by highly educated, energetic residents who volunteered their time and worked together and debated together to plan, it evolved out of “the community’s own consciousness of the need to preserve the environment and charm...” These futurists mapped in words and graphics how best to emphasize and retain the unique assets gifted to Del Mar. They envisioned our idea of Del Mar. Particular care was taken to keep Del Mar village-like and welcoming. (Links to the original 1976 CP and amended versions are here: [bit.ly/delmarcp](http://bit.ly/delmarcp).)

The Community Plan has worked. Because of it Del Mar remains a special place on the planet. We have open space areas and public parks: Seagrove Park, Powerhouse Park and the Del Mar Bluff Preserve with the goal of preserving city parks rather than allowing commercial development. The lagoon, closed off from the 1940s till the 1970s when citizen activists opened it up, cleaned it up

and stopped activities and development from degrading the wetlands. Most significantly, committed citizens supported the selection of the San Dieguito Lagoon for restoration by Southern California Edison as mitigation for SONGS, resulting in a \$93 million restoration project that significantly fulfilled the CP’s goal of preserving the San Dieguito Lagoon.

Today, though the Community Plan is amended periodically as state law or current circumstances require, there is danger of its being eroded by challenges claiming that it is too old, outdated, or more subtly eclipsed by the daily monetization of every inch of the city at the cost of our signature trees and vegetation. Today, we also face major impending perils from climate change and with it a drought-depleted water supply, sea level rise, vanishing sand, and frequent wildfires. Some others: the risk of the trains toppling off our receding bluffs that will or will not be armored and/or fenced and the even more dire threat posed by the unstable nuclear plant just a few miles up the road. This is a time for intelligent, thoughtful leadership from our elected officials who can work collaboratively to seek solutions in sync with our Community Plan.

As upcoming November elections start to get into gear, let’s look around and listen carefully to exactly what candidates promise lest the very charm that attracts people to Del Mar disappears. □



## Sandpiper

DEL MAR'S COMMUNITY JOURNAL

The Sandpiper is published by the Del Mar Community Alliance, a 501(C)(4) non-profit. Its purpose is to advocate the Del Mar Community Plan, to foster informed public and government decision-making regarding issues affecting the community of the City of Del Mar, and to encourage a social and political climate favorable to the protection of the community character of the City of Del Mar and its environs.

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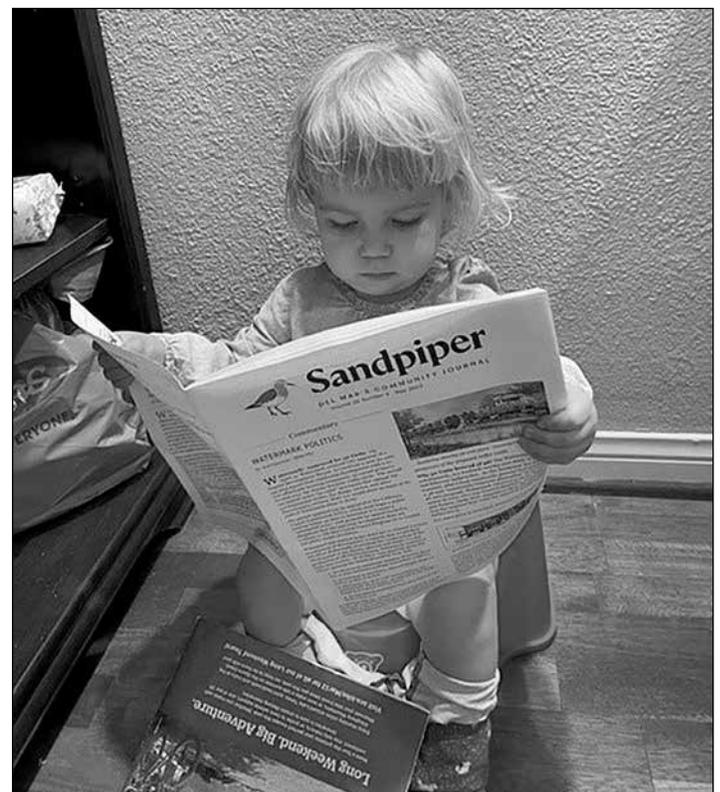
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*Clementine “pretends” to read and goes A A A O O O for each letter she sees. She loves looking at each picture in great detail. Photo by Sasha.*

by Don Mosier | Rimini Road

## NEGATIVE OR NOT?

by Don Mosier | Rimini Road

In an accompanying article, I report that my wife and I both tested negative before our return trip from Europe and for 5-7 days after returning to Del Mar. These tests were all variants of the rapid COVID antigen tests that report results after 10-15 minutes. I concluded (or hoped) that we had not been infected with the COVID virus or its several variants during our trip. With recent reports that these antigen tests may report false negatives for many days after infection, it is important to review how reliable these tests are for fully vaccinated, asymptomatic individuals at this time in the pandemic. Could these negative tests have misled us?

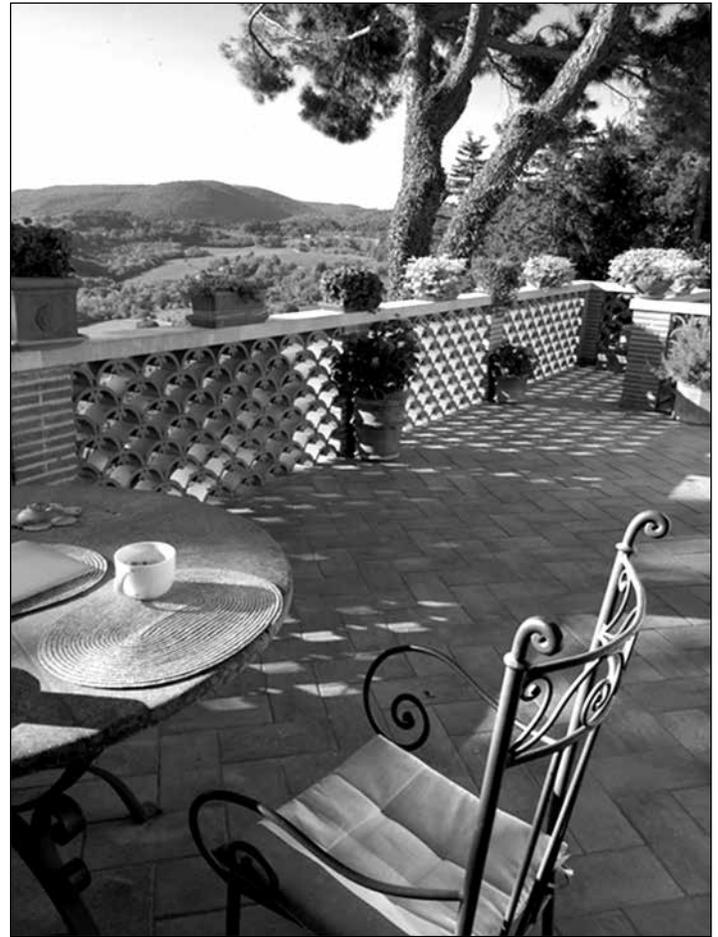
A recent study (Sensitivity of rapid COVID antigen tests during PCR-confirmed COVID infection by Chu VT, Schwartz NG, Donnelly MAP, et al. JAMA Intern Med. Published online April 29, 2022. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2022.1827) conducted in San Diego and the Denver area, recently published by JAMA Internal Medicine, compared the sensitivity... of the Quidel QuickVue SARS Antigen test that detects the presence of the COVID virus nucleocapsid (NC) protein to the gold standard viral nucleic acid RT-PCR test. The antigen test strip has a positive control (a blue line appears within 10 minutes of sample loading) and a separate red line appears if the test is positive, meaning that NC protein was present in the nasal swab sample.

The antigen test was 80% effective in detecting PCR-confirmed infection 3-4 days after symptoms of infection appeared in unvaccinated individuals, but only 50% effective in vaccinated subjects. These studies were conducted in 2021 before the Omicron variant was present in the study population, so it is highly unlikely that variation in the NC protein (which is much less variable than the spike protein) explains these results.

What is going on to explain the lower sensitivity in vaccinated subjects? The most likely explanation, although not the only one, is that the viral load is reduced after vaccination, resulting in less NC protein for the antigen test to detect. This would imply that individuals with asymptomatic infection might have false negative antigen tests because their viral load is likely to be low.

The immune system should be activated after vaccination much earlier than in unvaccinated individuals, leading both to a lower viral load and a delay in symptoms of infection. There are more complicated related explanations. Fully vaccinated older individuals may have less effective immune responses that initially control the virus at low and

*continued on page 4*



*Our outside eating area on our large deck overlooking the Tuscan countryside in Montepulciano, Italy.  
Photo by Don Mosier.*

After two years avoiding international travel because of the COVID pandemic, my wife Ann Feeney and I decided to spend five weeks in Europe this May and June. We are both fully vaccinated (two initial shots and two boosters), so we decided the risk might be worth the reward. So off we flew to visit Italy, Switzerland, Austria, and the Czech Republic. We survived without contracting COVID, with negative antigen tests the day before we flew home (a requirement dismissed two days after we were tested), and two more antigen negative tests and a negative PCR test 5-7 days after returning (see accompanying article on how reliable antigen tests are). Were we lucky or well prepared or both?

Here are some of the precautions we took on the trip:

- We wore masks on the plane, in the airport, and on public transport.

*continued on page 4*

**A garden to walk in  
and immensity to dream in...**

~Victor Hugo

**G**ardens and trees, butterflies and bees – summer immerses us in a natural world that is truly an immensity to dream in. But what legacy will we pass on to the next generation, with drought, wildfire, and climate change at the top of our daily news feed?

DMF grants have helped connect kids to nature through the Don Diego Scholarship Foundation’s Plant\*Grow\*Eat program, founded by Del Marian Jill Coughlin. In June, DMF reps enjoyed meeting children who brought their radishes and nasturtiums to the Fair for judging.

DMF is also working on other projects to connect us all more closely to nature: a demonstration garden at the Civic Center, to encourage residents to take action to support western monarch butterflies, which have been in precipitous decline; and a “40 trees to celebrate 40 years” project to highlight the role trees play in carbon sequestration, clean air, and more.

And we’re excited about the River Path Del Mar project to extend this trail from the Grand Ave. Overlook to Crest Canyon. Construction will begin next year; DMF’s \$50,000 grant supported the environmental work required for this project.

Conserving open space and the environment has been part of DMF’s mission from its founding 40 years ago, and today, it’s more important than ever. We owe it to the next generation to ensure they have gardens to walk in, and immensity to dream in. ■



*DMF’s grant to the Plant\*Grow\*Eat program helps connect children to the food on their plates, and the wonders of nature.*

undetected levels, but then fail and allow the virus and symptoms to emerge later than expected.

We still have a lot to learn about COVID infection and its consequences, how variable they are between individuals, and how virus variation contributes to disease severity. More studies like the one cited are needed to understand how virus detection assays work in the current disease context. But for now, negative rapid antigen test results should be considered inconclusive if COVID-like symptoms are present (50% sensitivity is not reassuring), and the much more sensitive nucleic acid test (RT-PCR) should be considered. After our trip to Europe, I am happy to report that we were antigen test and PCR test negative. ■

**FROM TRAVEL IN THE TIME OF COVID** *page 3*

- We only spent three nights (out of 35) in hotels. The rest of the time we stayed in Airbnb rental apartments for 2-5 nights. We booked apartments in smaller towns if possible, with two nights in Milan and five nights in Prague the main exceptions. The Tuscan villages of Cortona, Montepulciano, and Fezzano in Italy and Vitznau and Beatenburg in Switzerland were our favorites.

- We drove our own rental car except for one three-hour train trip from Milan to Zurich, where we both wore masks.

- We tried to have as many restaurant meals outside as possible, and often had lunch at a restaurant and cooked our own dinners.

- Most of the rentals had outside decks where we enjoyed dining (and some beautiful views, see Montepulciano picture).

- We felt safest in Italy, where masks were required (and worn) on public transportation and in grocery stores. Masks were required to get on the ferries at Lake Maggiore and Lake Como, and they were provided if you forgot to bring your own. Most people kept them on even if sitting outside on the deck. All the crew wore masks.

- We visited a number of cathedrals and most required masks to enter. We complied.

- Fewer people were masked once we left Italy. Almost no one else was masked in Prague, but we were, especially on the crowded trams. By the way, trams and the metro are free to those over 70 years of age in Prague (are you listening, NCTD?). We did walk a lot, but it was hard to avoid the crowds on weekend days.

We were well prepared and took many precautions, but there is no way you can travel and avoid risky situations. We accepted those risks, we were lucky not to be infected, and we loved the trip. ■

# GEORGE HOOVER 1936-2022



Photo by Maryka Hoover.

George was a wine connoisseur and a political activist who helped pass the Community Plan, elect “green” Council Members, acquire open space (Seagrove Park, Anderson Canyon, Crest Canyon.) As a financial advisor and early Qualcomm investor he helped create numerous multimillionaires. He was a superb athlete, excelling on the golf course, on the tennis court, and winning five Del Mar beach volleyball championships with his longtime friend Bud Emerson. ■

## In Brief

### Del Mar Beaches Make Honor Roll

Heal The Bay’s annual report grades 500 beaches throughout California, giving Del Mar a perfect water score along with fourteen other San Diego County beaches. The nonprofit bases its scoring on the levels of fecal-indicator bacterial pollution in the ocean measured by county health agencies. Our county trailed only Orange County in the number of beaches on the Honor Roll. ■



by Ashley Simpkins, Program Director

### Ice Cream Social 2022

We had a wonderful time on the Civic Center Plaza at DMCC’s annual Spring Ice Cream Social on May 20. In its second year, the Ice Cream Social is quickly becoming a community favorite event on our calendar. The Social and Good Times Committee led by Linda Chisari planned a delightful party, and Danny’s Ice Cream Truck distributed everyone’s favorite ice cream treats. We watched as longtime friends reunited and we met with members of the community who are excited to participate more in our programs or to start volunteering for us. Make sure you don’t miss out on the next big DMCC community event – join our email list to be invited to all of our activities!



DMCC Social and Good Times volunteers at the 2022 Spring Ice Cream Social

### CPR Training

We are grateful to the Del Mar Fire Department for taking the time recently to train DMCC staff and key volunteers in CPR. Three firemen came to the Del Mar Community Building on a Monday morning to deliver the most up-to-date best practices, providing a course about delegating responsibilities, giving proper chest compressions, using an AED machine, and more. We hope none of us ever have to use the skills they taught us, but we’re appreciative to have caring partners in the community who are helping us to look out for senior neighbors. We hope to do this again; DMCC volunteers who couldn’t make it this time will be notified when a future opportunity comes around.

#### For more information... or to join our email list:

Please visit our website at [www.dmcc.cc](http://www.dmcc.cc) or contact the DMCC office at (858) 792-7565 or [dmcc@dmcc.cc](mailto:dmcc@dmcc.cc). ■

## DMB5 APPROVAL

### Coastal Commission Approves SANDAG's Del Mar Bluff Stabilization Project

by Betty Wheeler | Seaview Avenue

**O**n June 8, 2022, sitting in session at the Del Mar Hilton, the California Coastal Commission (CCC) voted unanimously to approve SANDAG's \$68 million Del Mar bluff stabilization project called "DMB5." Important mitigation measures required by the approval include removal of the seawalls after 30 years or when the railroad tracks are relocated off the bluff, and improved public access, including at least one safe and legal track crossing at either 7th or 11th street, coupled with a safe and legal improved access down to the beach.

SANDAG and CCC staff advocated for approval; Surfrider Foundation supported the staff recommendation but proposed a number of specific modifications (many of which were accepted). Others testified in opposition, contending the project, especially its seawalls, would do irreparable damage to the Del Mar bluffs and beach. Many advocated for delay and further study. Councilmember Terry Gaasterland read a prepared statement on behalf of the City supporting Surfrider's input and indicating the city has "serious concerns about the adverse effects of seawalls" that need to be addressed.

The CCC approved what was described as a three-legged stool, with each leg being necessary to keep the rail line safe until it can be relocated inland:

1. Drainage improvements to control surface runoff that is currently causing bluff erosion and collapse;
2. Targeted seawalls to stabilize the toe of the bluff in vulnerable locations — about a half mile of the 1.6-mile beach in total;
3. Upper bluff soldier piles drilled in vertically, encased in concrete with buried tie backs, to stabilize the tracks and minimize the need for seawalls and upper bluff walls.

Based on over 100 pages of staff analysis and findings, the CCC agreed this system was necessary to keep the rail system safe until it can be relocated inland, which is SANDAG's plan by 2035. The CCC concluded the three project components provided for the shortest length of

seawalls and was the least environmentally damaging option available.

Commission executive director Jack Ainsworth stated: "The engineering elements all act in concert, you can't just pull one out. Waiting to install seawalls at another time would simply be dangerous and irresponsible..." He described the project as a "vast improvement over previous proposals."

NCTD registered its objection to the project alleging that federal preemption law prohibits the Coastal Commission from acting.

**Mitigation Requirements:** Recognizing that seawalls are never favored, but are temporarily necessary

in this unique situation, the CCC imposed mitigation requirements to address damage that will be caused by the temporary seawalls. With this mitigation, the Commission found DMB5 consistent with the Coastal Act:

- The seawalls must be removed in 30 years or when the rail is relocated, whichever occurs first, and the beach and bluffs must be restored to their natural condition.
- Public access and recreation must be

enhanced by providing at least one safe and legal track crossing at either 7th or 11th Street, coupled with a safe and legal improved access down to the beach, and adding a one-mile walking trail from Seagrove Park to 4th Street along the east side of the tracks with improved trail access at the street ends;

- The specifics of the public access improvements must be designed in consultation with the City and interested stakeholders and must proceed concurrently with the rest of the project.

**What From Here?** The next step will be for the SANDAG Board of Directors to review the Coastal Commission's action and prepare a construction contract for SANDAG Board approval. Then the project can start. Construction is expected to last for approx. 3 years. Community outreach and design of the access improvements will start this fall when the in-process Coastal Access Study will be completed. Surfrider, the City, and others continue to advocate for access at both 7th and 11th Streets, and they want a say on the details of the paths and crossings, so expect them to stay engaged. ■



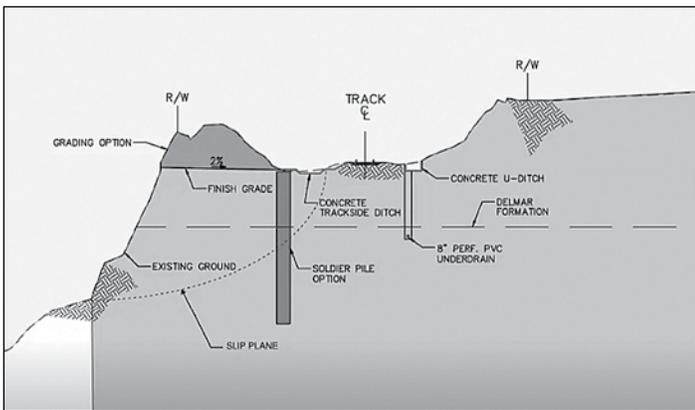
Source: California Coastal Commission Staff Report.

Commentary

## HOBSON'S CHOICE?

by Bud Emerson | Klish Way

I believe the SANDAG/Coastal Commission approval of a plan for track protection by armoring the Del Mar bluffs is one of the most consequential changes Del Mar has ever experienced. We have been presented with two alternatives (Door A and Door B). The original proposal (Door A) called for a major decapitation of the bluff top along with significant armoring—this raised serious concerns. More recently, we were presented with a “compromise three legged stool” (Door B) proposal which called for sea walls on the beach at the toe of the bluffs, soldier piles with tie backs at the top, and drainage improvements to reduce water runoff. Again serious objections were raised but the Coastal Commission decided to choose Door B.



A picture from the SANDAG presentation to City Council on September 20, 2021 showing a cross section of the track and adjoining bluffs near 9th Street, with the removal of the top of the bluff indicated by the darker colored “grading option.” R/W stands for the NCTD right-of-way. Note: In the end the “decapitation” plan was **not** chosen by the Coastal Commission.

According to Wikipedia a dilemma is a choice between two or more options, neither of which is attractive.

Hobson’s Choice is often used to describe an illusion of choice, meaning there is only one choice.

Choosing between two terrible ways to deface our bluffs seems like a dilemma, but in reality it is a Hobson’s Choice because we are only given one choice: to deface the bluff, one undesirable way or another-- not whether or not to deface the bluff. The only way to get a real alternative is to decide whether to move the tracks or deface the bluff. This is why elected officials are paid the big bucks (in our situation only four Council Members had the courage to address the issue — Druker found a way to duck out). The central mission of the Coastal Commission is to protect the natural coast, not the tracks.

The reality is that our community is very united in our desire to protect the bluffs and move the tracks so that’s where our energy should go. Of course we have no choice but to accept Plan B to try to avoid a tragic train catastrophe, but where is the regional sense of urgency this issue deserves? How much more multi-million dollar patching will our bluffs suffer until we get to the →

Commentary

## SHORT-TERM / LONG-TERM

by Dwight Worden | Seaview Avenue

Sometimes short-term damage is unavoidable to achieve long term benefit. When someone has a heart attack, it may be necessary to cut open their chest — a damaging process — to save their life. To restore our beautiful lagoon, heavy construction equipment dredged and reshaped the wetlands, damaging or removing existing habitat, in order to achieve the long-term benefits of a full restoration of the lagoon.

So it is with the rails on the bluff. Interim beach and bluff damage is necessary to achieve the long-term benefit of relocating the rails to return them to a natural state for the long term. This is why the Coastal Commission and the Surfrider Foundation, both staunch opponents of seawalls, approved the SANDAG Bluff Stabilization Project 5 with its interim seawalls—the Commission with a remarkable 9-0 vote.

Driving realities behind this decision were **4 key factors**: 1) the rail has to be relocated inland, but that might take 30 years; 2) the rail has to be made safe until relocation, and that requires temporary seawalls and upper bluff soldier piles and drainage improvements, as the least environmentally damaging alternative; 3) interim seawalls must be removed in 30 years or upon rail relocation, whichever occurs first, and the bluff and beach returned to its natural condition; and 4) immediate mitigation is needed in the form of at least one safe and legal rail crossing including access down the bluff to the beach at either 7th or 11th street, an improved one mile walking trail on the east of the rail line, improved access at the street ends, drainage improvements, wetlands mitigation, city and public participation in design of the details of the walking trails and beach access, and more.

In short, the Commission, Surfrider Foundation, SANDAG, and the many resources agencies and experts who reviewed the project all concluded that approval of this project, with significant mitigation measures, was the best available option. We should thank them. The interim damage from seawalls is undeniable. But the option of no seawalls would leave the rail at unacceptable risk of collapse, putting lives at risk as the 60+ trains per day traverse the eroding bluffs. Or, with no seawalls, the bluff could have been stabilized with 20 to 30 foot high upper bluff walls and many more non-removable soldier piles, all of which would be visible, ugly, and permanent (with the soldier piles becoming visible as the bluff erodes). Because of the poor decision made in the early 1900s to locate the train on the bluff, we find ourselves in this situation. All we can do is choose the best available option. That is exactly what the Coastal Commission did. ▣

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thirteen year target for track relocation? Yes, we are promised that one day all of these patches will be removed and our magnificent bluffs will be restored. Sure! We have known for decades that the tracks are perilous.

Both tunneling and realignment along I-5 should be pursued on extreme time lines, as well as funding sources from all interests including the freight industry and the industrial military complex. Mother Nature is watching us! ▣

## SQUIRRELLY

by Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

Perhaps you recall the *Tale of Squirrel Nutkin* of the British Beatrix Potter's imagination written in 1903 about an impertinent red squirrel named Nutkin and his narrow escape from an owl, Old Brown, at the cost of Nutkin's losing his tail. Know that our local California Ground Squirrels, a beige/gray with white trim color, are much better behaved. Related to prairie dogs and chipmunks, their alternate name, *Otospermophilus beecheyi* or the Beechey Ground Squirrel, is in honor of Frederick William Beechey, captain of His Majesty's Ship *Blossom*, who explored, among many other areas, Northern California in the 1820s. The origin of the name squirrel, however, goes further back to Ancient Greek, *skiouros*, meaning shadow tail.

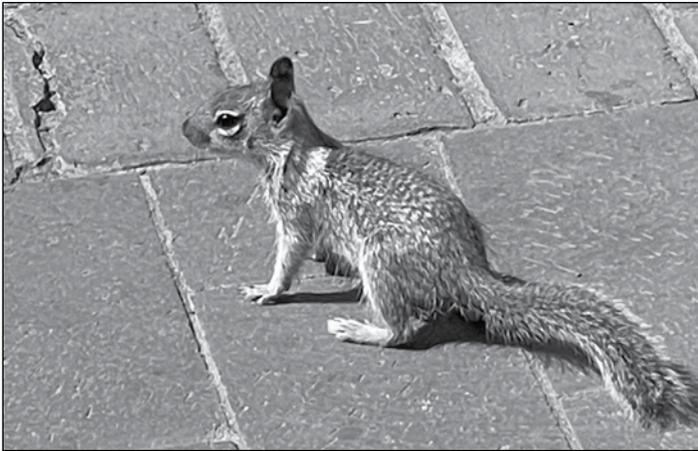


Photo by Julie Maxey-Allison.

You can often spot our ground squirrels during the day, if not in your yard, in Seagrove Park among the rocks and bushes atop our cliffs. While ever ready to beg for a snack from passersby and quick to scatter if none is offered, their main diet is seeds, berries, leaves, woody plants, insects and grasshoppers. Being rodent like, they do need to chew on bark to keep their teeth trimmed. They are restless, alert and quick moving, squirrely, lest they become a snack for raccoons, snakes or birds of prey. Early spring is their time to mate. Females, practicing polyamory, produce one litter of five up to 11 kits a year. At night they retire to their communal living quarters in underground burrows. Home bodies, they stay within about 80 feet of their burrows. Being ground squirrels, they leave aerial antics to other squirrel varieties.

Squirrel Nutkin though notable, isn't the only squirrel portrayed in literature. Others, but not necessarily California Ground Squirrels, are featured in many writings, some for children and several for adults. Summer reading? An adult oriented list from Elizabeth McKenzie, author of *The Portable Veblen*, a novel in which a squirrel appears, includes *A Diamond as Big as the Ritz* by F. Scott Fitzgerald: a squirrel leads to the discovery of that big diamond in the title; *Pnin* by Vladimir Nabokov: Professor Pnin is shadowed by a squirrel; *Small Game* by John Blades: the squirrel is a demon creator of discord; *This Boy's Life* by Tobias →

## TEWAGATE

by Bud Emerson | Klish Way

The Tewa Street neighborhood undergrounding project has begun just as the drought-plagued fire season begins. Council Member Gaasterland, working with political allies in the neighborhood, convinced the Council majority (Gaasterland, Druker, Martinez, Quirk) to move this project to the head of the line against the advice of the citizen advisory committee which called for neighborhoods adjacent to Crest Canyon be first because of their higher fire risk. Members of the advisory committee resigned in protest. The construction will take about four months. The Crest Canyon neighborhood project is now scheduled to begin construction in mid 2023 and take about 18 months to compete — this will take it through two more fire seasons. These projects are part of a city-wide, multi-year undergrounding program funded by a 1% sales tax increase approved by voters in 2016. ■



Photo by Julie Maxey-Allison.

## In Brief

### Grannies Growth

Del Mar has received 93 applications for Accessory Development Units (ADU), sometimes known as “granny flats.” So far 49 building permits have been approved. By state law, ADUs are not subject to local review or zoning limits. The city cannot track whether these units are actually used for rentals, but the state does count them as new units. ■

Wolff: a squirrel is an innocent victim of a shooting; *St Peter's Day* by Anton Chekhov: a squirrel comes to a bad end at the hands of a foolish hunting party. Franz Kafka wrote about a squirrel in his notebooks. And Frederick Nietzsche's sister reported he had a favored porcelain squirrel named “King Squirrel 1,” a muse. ■

# HUBBELL PLAQUES

by Peter Jensen | El Amigo Road



*The author, Peter Jensen, is framed by two of three redwood posts that are part of James Hubbell's sculpture, A River Of Time. Photo by Hylton Lonstein.*

A celebration of Del Mar's first public artwork, a sculpture by acclaimed artist James Hubbell, took place on June 3, 2022, with the unveiling of two bronze plaques at a reception held in front of the Del Mar Library, the sculpture's location. The event was co-sponsored by the Del Mar Foundation (DMF) and Friends of the Del Mar Library.

The sculpture was installed in 1999, following a generous donation to DMF from an anonymous donor to underwrite the acquisition of the bronze and redwood sculpture titled "A River of Time." Del Mar resident Susan Childs had recently noticed that the sculpture had no identifying plaques, and donated to DMF to underwrite the cost of a plaque at the base of the sculpture, and a second, larger plaque visible to people viewing the artwork from the sidewalk.

Artist James Hubbell, now 90, sent his thank yous to the gathering to celebrate the sculpture and unveil the new plaques. As a Board member of the Ilan-Lael Foundation — the arts organization started by James and his wife Anne — I had occasion to talk with James in advance of the reception about Del Mar and this sculpture. James well recalled his early days in Del Mar. He first came to Del Mar in 1941 as a young boy, and after the war his stepfather had an ocean-fishing tackle shop here, during the heyday of the Del Mar fishing pier era. After his parents divorced, James's mother converted the shop in 1948 into a women's clothing boutique called "Flair" before going on to own a hotel in Rancho Santa Fe.

Many have wondered if the sculpture's three redwood posts, each capped with copper, have always been companions to the bronze wave-form. The answer is yes, says James: "The sculpture's posts have something to do with the pier, and they are also an offset to the ocean — something to balance the piece, make it part of the land."

*Seeking Beauty, Jim's Gift*, a new biography of Hubbell's life by Angie Brenner with Sarah Jamieson, is available in Del Mar at Anne Mery's book corner inside Julie's Beachwear. □

## Letter to the Editor

### Sacrificial Lambs

Maneck Wadia (Luneta Drive) writes, "Our children are being used as sacrificial lambs to the altar of the Second Amendment...."

AR-15s, the civilian equivalent of the M16 military weapon, are semi-automatic and can hold up to 100 rounds of bullets that shatter the target. Because there were nearly 400,000 assault weapons in the hands of American citizens, a law was passed to ban them in 1994. A decade later that law expired and today there are nearly 20 million AR-15s in the hands of civilians. The sole purpose of these weapons is mass killings. These are often used in school massacres. Surely, they can be banned without affecting normal gun rights...."

The full letter is online: [delmarsandpiper.org/letters/](https://delmarsandpiper.org/letters/). □

## In Brief

### Collectors Covered

When the City was in the process of awarding the new contract for collection of trash, recycling, and organics, many residents provided comments to the City Council offering high praise for Waste Management's trash collectors. EDCO offered to hire all WM trash collectors assigned to Del Mar, including full credit for the seniority accruing from their WM employment. Of the three WM drivers/collectors who worked in Del Mar, one, who worked in commercial collection, decided to retire, but has a short-term contract with EDCO to train the new driver. The two who worked in residential collection are expected to accept EDCO's offer. So Del Mar residents can expect to see the same friendly and professional drivers/collectors after July 1, when EDCO's Del Mar service begins. EDCO's service will use two-axle trucks for Del Mar, though one of those is not expected to arrive until the end of July. □

### Fencing Match on the Bluffs

Those interested in the North County Transit District's (NCTD's) plan to install fencing its right-of-way on the Del Mar bluffs may need a law degree to follow the convoluted legal proceedings seeking to uphold or challenge NCTD's right to install the fence. Originally, NCTD filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (STB) seeking a ruling that state law obligations asserted by the City of Del Mar and the California Coastal Commission (CCC), such as State law-based environmental requirements, are preempted by federal law, with respect to NCTD's fencing plan. More recently, two separate additional legal actions were filed in state court against NCTD: one by Friends of Del Mar Bluffs and Laura DeMarco, and another by CCC. Both cases were removed by NCTD to federal court. On June 2, 2022, the federal judge issued a stay in both of those cases, noting that "the orderly course of justice measured in terms of simplifying issues is served by allowing the STB to determine the preemption issues." CCC has moved to set aside that stay. Meanwhile, there is no indication when the STB is likely to decide the case pending before it. NCTD's Matt Tucker stated in a recent STB filing that NCTD will not act to install the fence until after STB rules on the petition pending there. □

# WELL-COMPOSED LIFE

by Betty Wheeler | Seaview Avenue

When composer Jordan Kuspa moved back to Del Mar in 2018, he immediately began to think about setting down musical roots: “I had been away since childhood, and wanted to create something that would keep me connected to Del Mar, no matter where I went. My first thought was to develop an annual artistic event—something that would always lead me back to the Del Mar community.” Kuspa began to reach out to local musicians, including soprano Tasha Hokuao Koontz, music director at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, and the Hausmann Quartet, artist faculty at SDSU. A meeting with the Del Mar Foundation’s Cultural Arts Committee led to Kuspa making further connections in the community, and ultimately led to the Foundation providing fiscal sponsorship and grant support to the new project, the Del Mar International Composers Symposium. In August 2019, the first season of DMICS was held at St. Peter’s, featuring the Hausmann Quartet performing the music of six composers hailing from as far away as South Korea, Iran, and the Canary Islands.



*Composer Polina Nazaykinskaya, soprano Tasha Hokuao Koontz, and DMICS Director Jordan Kuspa before a DMICS concert at the Powerhouse Community Center on Aug. 10, 2021.  
Photo by Carron Martin*

Now in its third season, DMICS has grown significantly. This year’s program runs for the first two weeks of August, and will feature four public concerts, along with presentations by the guest composers, librettists, and other collaborators. The Hausmann Quartet opens the public concerts on August 5 at Town Hall, followed by a Boston-based ensemble, Hub New Music, performing at the Powerhouse Community Center on August 9. Pianist Konstantin Soukhovetski, on faculty at Juilliard, plays a solo recital at St. Peter’s on August 11th. The season concludes with a night of opera, as DMICS partners with the locally-based FF Collective to present short operas and works in progress by Kuspa, returning composer Polina Nazaykinskaya, Omar Surillo, and Meilina Tsui.

On the new opera component of DMICS, Kuspa explained: “This new collaboration with the FF Collective allows composers to develop their ideas while they are here in Del Mar, and to share their work in progress with the public. Two of the operas have been commissioned by major opera companies, and this →

# HOUSING STICKER SHOCK

by Bud Emerson | Klish Way

At a special City Council meeting on June 13, two consultant teams presented Phase I planning studies for affordable housing on the Fairgrounds and on two vacant City-owned sites. Council members seemed taken aback by the large amount of local money that would likely be needed to achieve between 61 and 83 units on the Fairgrounds, with estimates ranging from about \$7- 13 million. However, every Council Member voiced support for “going big” and looking aggressively for county and state financial support to create a “model for how to create affordable housing on state property.”

These preliminary studies are just the start. Much more work needs to be done to pin down specifics, including forging an agreement with the 22nd DAA to site housing on the Fairgrounds property. The studies focused on two acres near the southwest corner of the Via de la Valle and Jimmy Durante Blvd. intersection, with a two-story project, possibly targeting either senior or family occupants. The analysis also focused on two additional city-owned sites, on 28th Street and on 10th St. at the Civic Center.

The Council is expected to discuss next steps at a regular Council meeting in September 2022.

Under the terms of the City’s 6th Cycle housing element (adopted Dec. 2021), if an agreement is not reached with the 22nd DAA by Dec. 2024 for housing on the Fairgrounds property, the City will be required to rezone up to nine vacant parcels on North Bluff or South Stratford, at a density of 20-25 dwelling units per acre (du/a), with “by right” approval for projects with 20% low-income housing, to accommodate at least 54 of the 101 lower income units in Del Mar’s RHNA allocation. For example, the housing element identifies North Bluff properties adjacent to Border Ave. that could be rezoned for up to 200-250 above-moderate units and 47-61 lower-income units, at the required density of 20-25 du/a. □

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will be the first time any of this music is performed anywhere. It will give our audience a true sneak peek into how operas are made.”

Last summer, DMICS initiated a new student program offering talented college and early professional composers the opportunity to workshop their music with DMICS artists. This August, over a dozen students from top music schools including Juilliard, the New England Conservatory, USC, and Yale will join Kuspa and faculty composers Robert Honstein and Nina C. Young in developing new works and sharing musical ideas. Each student brings an unfinished work and, with the help of the DMICS faculty, hone the works into a final shape. The pieces are recorded for use in each student’s portfolio. They also come to appreciate the beauty of Del Mar and the warmth of our community here.

Once again, Del Mar Foundation is sponsoring this year’s DMICS with fiscal sponsorship and a matching grant. For information on how to make a donation that will be matched by DMF, contact [dmf@delmarfoundation.org](mailto:dmf@delmarfoundation.org).

The 2022 Del Mar International Composers Symposium runs from August 1–14, and will feature more performances, more artists, and more ways to interact with the creative process than ever before. For more information or to purchase concert tickets: [www.delmarcomposers.org](http://www.delmarcomposers.org). □

# MILK EGGS & NUMBER 5

by Jon Emerson | formerly Klish Way

I recently visited my parents in Del Mar where I grew up. I wanted to get some tortilla chips to accompany homemade guacamole. My Dad said that I would have to go to the Del Mar Heights Vons. I remembered back to a different time when I had more hair and could ride a skateboard down to the Windmill Farms grocery store at the corner of 15th St. and 101 — with a superb parking lot view of the ocean. There were four or five gas stations, a 7-11, a donut shop (my personal weakness) and several liquor stores. Then over time they all morphed into restaurants, office space or strip malls. The Plaza replaced the Windmill Farms market with restaurants and shops but after twenty five years could not consistently house a market. The Mobil and Zel’s Liquor on 15th Street became a Starbucks and a bank. It was like an episode of Survivor and only little Del Mar Liquor and Deli was not voted off the island.



Photo by Bud Emerson.

Del Mar Liquor and Deli is a great little store packed with a wonderful selection of craft beers, wine and liquor. I found a bag of really authentic Mexican tortilla chips next to high quality kettle potato chips. Then there is the Deli! Sixteen different sandwiches to select from as well as a few breakfast options. Unfortunately, I couldn’t sample any of the delicious looking sandwiches as I am intolerant of gluten. Long-time owner Jimmy Bagata promised to check with his supplier about the availability of gluten free breads. But have no fear salads are here! They prepare tuna salad, chicken salad, roast beef salad (my favorite) — and many others. If you can handle gluten you don’t want to miss the surfers’ favorite, Number 5 with turkey and avocado on multigrain toast. And for those who miss the quick trip to the grocery for last minute items you can find milk, eggs, and a small selection of fruits and vegetables. ■

# CLEAN AND CRISP BEACH FRONT

by Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

Location! Oceanfront! Occupying the same space as the former Del Mar Motel, vintage 1968, the **Del Mar Beach Hotel** is open under new ownership after multiple months of intense renovations. The 46 reconfigured rooms are clean and crisp with communal outdoor side and front patios. Guests have the use of beach equipment, beach cruisers, surfboards and such and organized activities. The added options: the two houses just north of the parking lot — the updated circa 1880s “original” and the larger house next door — are available as as short-term rentals.

1702 Coast Boulevard, 858-400-8800, DelMarHotel.com ■

# Quotable Del Mar

## ROSE ANN SHARP

“The Second Amendment is not a license to kill. Gun violence is predictable and preventable. A proven way is to regulate access to military-style assault weapons that have been used in almost every mass murder in America. The 1994 Assault Weapons Ban reduced gun violence by 43%, and its expiration in 2004 increased the number of deaths by 239%.”  
 -from Commentary, “Gun Violence is Predictable and Preventable: You Can Help Stop the Violence” <https://delmarsandpiper.org/2022-05-30-news>



Rose Ann Sharp, left, with Todd Gloria and other public officials. Photo courtesy of Ira Sharp.

Del Mar resident Rose Ann Sharp, founder of NeverAgainCA, has been at the forefront of political activism to support gun safety measures, calling on public officials at all levels “to stop playing politics with peoples’ lives and address our epidemic of gun violence.” She is “fearless” in her work to make “our community a safer place for all of us,” according to San Diego Mayor and former 78th District Assemblymember Todd Gloria. ■



Del Mar Beach Hotel at left. Photo by Julie Maxey-Allison.

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## DRY DROUGHT YEARS

by Mike Uhrhammer | Stratford Court

January, February and March of this year were the driest ever recorded in California. And 2020, 2021 and 2022 are projected to be the driest three-year period ever recorded.

Researchers just down the road from Del Mar, at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, say this is what climate change looks like.

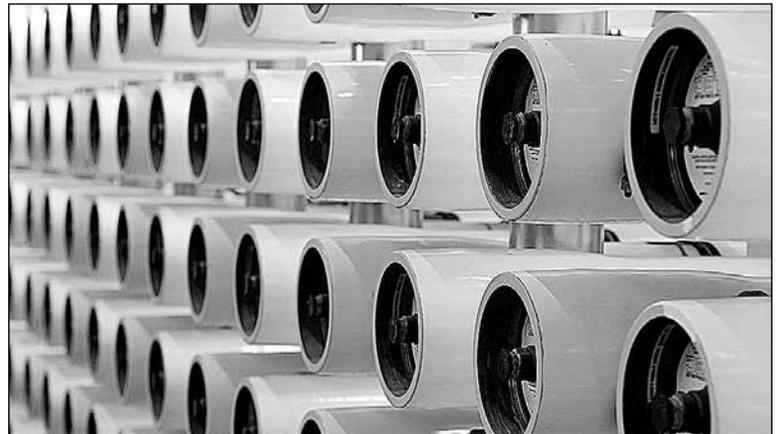
California has the most volatile precipitation in the United States — the last 130 years were a random pattern of years with too little rain or too much. But warmer average temperatures make dry years drier — higher evaporation rates steal water from soil, crops and forests.

Higher evaporation rates also make wet years wetter — increasing the amount of water in the atmosphere and the risk of extreme storms like Hurricane Harvey, which dropped 40 inches of rain on Houston in just four days.

How do we survive and thrive in this warmer climate? Researchers from UC Davis and Stanford have partnered with farmers and nonprofits to recharge the depleted aquifers under California's central valley. They are moving 100 year old levees away from rivers to restore floodplains, and using existing canals to flood farmland, when river flows are high. This is a strategy for wet years.

Similarly, in Los Angeles, city workers and the nonprofit Tree People are breaking up asphalt and creating landscapes along streets and alleys that capture stormwater and recharge the aquifers below the city.

In San Francisco, the downtown headquarters for the city's public utilities department uses 65% less water than buildings of similar size. The water from faucets and toilets flows into an onsite treatment system that mimics tidal



*Reverse Osmosis Canisters.  
Photo courtesy of Orange County Water District.*

wetlands. Plants and microbes in the soil clean the water, which is chlorinated and pumped back into the building's toilets. The project was so successful that the city lent its engineers to developers, and many buildings later passed an ordinance requiring all new buildings to have alternative water supplies. This is a strategy for dry years.

And here in San Diego, three projects are underway that use reverse osmosis and advanced oxidation to purify recycled water and create a new, drought-proof drinking water supply. We're following Orange County, which has done this for years, and Los Angeles is also developing this dry year strategy.

The key to these new strategies and projects is not new technology. Essentially, we are restoring and mimicking natural systems. The key is the collaboration among water utilities, universities and nonprofits. That's where the answers are.

*Ed Note: Uhrhammer has worked in public water utilities since 2001. ■*